It is Only Fair!

Redress for the Head Tax and Chinese Exclusion Act

Copyright © 1988 by CCNC

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means without written permission of CCNC.

Design: Jessie Cheng, David Cheung, Kathy Wong

Contents

Introduction	2
Labour Used, Labour Discarded	5
Chinese Immigration (Exclusion) Act, 1885	8
What is a Head Tax?	9
What Happened to the Head Tax Money?	12
Chinese Exclusion Act, 1923	13
Socio-Economic Impact of the Head Tax and the Chinese Exclusion Act	14
Progress to Equality	17
Call for Justice	19
Summary	23
References	25
Chinese Canadian National Council	27

Where are the coolies in your poem, Ned?

Where are the thousands from China who swung

their picks with bare hands at forty below?

Between the first and the million other spikes they

drove, and the dressed-up act of Donald Smith,

who has sung their story?

Did they fare so well in the land they helped to unite?

Did they get one of the 25,000,000 CPR acres?

Is all Canada has to say to them written in the

Chinese Immigration Act?

F.R.Scott (from "All the Spikes But the Last",1966)

Chinese Canadians have settled in and helped build Canada for more than a century. In 1983, Chinese Canadians celebrated the 125th Anniversary of their presence in Canada. While the celebration served to mark our contribution to Canadian society, it was also a reminder of the racism and discrimination that Chinese have been subjected to for the past century.

The first Chinese settlers arrived in 1858 and worked on mines in British Columbia. Their settlement was not welcomed by the government or by miners who harboured racial hatred toward them. Anti-Chinese legislation began as early as 1860 when Vancouver Island proposed a $10 poll tax on each Chinese person in the colony. British Columbia passed many laws and regulations against the Chinese, beginning in the 1870s. There were taxes on rice, taxes on entry by Chinese and taxes on Chinese already residing in the province. Some of these provisions were declared unconstitutional, but only because B.C. had infringed on federal powers, not because it had infringed on human rights. At that time, there was no Charter of Rights and Freedoms to give constitutional protection against such racism.

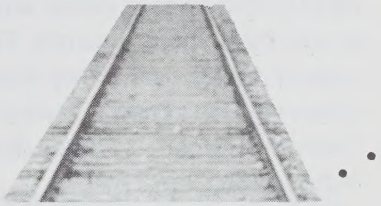
In contrast with the numerous attempts the provincial government made in trying to curb the migration of Chinese, business entrepreneurs welcomed the cheap Chinese labour which was so desperately needed since this abundant supply dampened wage hikes in the labour force. The Dominion had foreseen that there was a great need for cheap Chinese labour for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway; consequently, it took an indifferent stance to tightening immigration. In fact, John A.Macdonald stated that "Either it (B.C.) must have Chinese labour or it could not have the railway." Even though Macdonald believed in every sense that the Chinese would not and could not be expected to assimilate with the white population, he was far too pragmatic to propose the exclusion of Chinese from Canada until the railway was completed.

In an agreement made with the Dominion government of Canada, British Columbia was to be "joined" to Canada by the construction of a transnational railway through the Rocky Mountains. But, the estimated cost to the Dominion was exorbitant and many provinces already in the Dominion expressed open dissatisfaction about the spending of a mammoth amount on a "province" that had yet to prove its worth as an acquisition. Nevertheless, plans were drawn up for the construction of the railway and contract labour from China was deemed to be the cheapest means to attain this goal.

Labour Used, Labour Discarded

While he gives us his (Chinese) labour he is paid for it, and is valuable, the same as a threshing machine or any other agricultural implement which we may borrow from the United States on hire and return it to the owner on the south side of the line.

House of Commons debate, April 16, 1879.



In 1881, there were only 35,000 "white" citizens in British Columbia. The contractor of the railway company, Andrew Onderdonk needed 10,000 workers to build the railway. When he arrived in Victoria he pacified the anti-Chinese delegation by stating that he would definitely give preference to white labour and would engage Chinese and Indians as the last resort.

However, not long after he started the construction of the railway on May 14, 1880, the dangers involved in building some sections through the Rockies were so serious that he had great difficulties in getting men who were willing to be suspended by ropes to drill holes in chasm walls for explosives. So, he sent for Chinese labourers. The construction sites were so dangerous that they were given the infamous names of "Hell's Gate", "Jaws of Death Arch" and "Indictment Hole" as vividly described in Pierre Berton's "The Last Spike":

> "...Onderdonk took command...ordered ringbolts driven into the rock walls of the canyon and he placed 150 Chinese labourers at intervals along the banks passing heavy rope through the bolts...ropes attached to the ship's capstan,... mass of coolies tugging and straining along the bank (to cling to the ropes and pull was imperative, for to lose one's grip and fall meant certain death)...current so swift, first voyage she (the boat Skuzzy) was badly damaged...".

Accidents were frequent. Many died of exhaustion from hard work, harsh weather, and extremely poor living conditions. Others perished in rock explosions, were buried in collapsed tunnels, drowned in rivers after falling from unfinished bridges, or died from scurvy with little medical attention.

When work was completed in the Fraser Canyon during the winter of 1883-1884, the contractors fired the Chinese workers, leaving them to scrabble for pickings in the worked-out bars of the Fraser or to exist in near destitution in the dying towns along the completed track.

The Chinese in Canada have a saying that a Chinese worker died for every foot of railroad through the canyons. Though that may be exaggerated, it is estimated that at least 600 Chinese died during this railroad construction. In 1891, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association of Victoria arranged for the collection of more than three hundred unidentified corpses from the Fraser and Thompson canyons and these were returned to China for burial.

Onderdonk's employment of over 15,000 Chinese labourers significantly cut down the construction expenses by up to $5 million. In fact, the

railway construction syndicate made an extra $3.5 million in profits to be utilized by the depressed American economy.

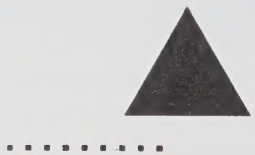
In 1884, before the railway was finished, Ottawa appointed Adolphe Chapleau and Judge John Hamilton Gray to chair the Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration. Many of the anti-Chinese factions boycotted this Comission because they believed that the Commissioners were too sympathetic towards Chinese immigrants. However, the Commission called upon fifty-one witnesses. Out of all these witnesses, only two were of Chinese descent and they were from San Francisco.

Summing up the evidence provided by the many witnesses, Judge Gray concluded that, in order to concur with the large majority of the public, legislation should be enacted to restrict Chinese immigration. The judge further recommended that a head tax of $10 be levied on each disembarking immigrant woman, man, or child to cover the cost of "managing" the Chinese population.

Chinese Immigration (Exclusion) Act, 1885

Looking ahead still further, I believe, that after the railway is completed, the 6000 Chinese we import should not be discouraged from remaining in the province. A country like British Columbia can be most profitably and successfully developed by a cheap class of labour.

A.Onderdonk (from his letter to Sir John A. Macdonald, 14th June, 1882)



The last spike was finally driven in 1885, and not one Chinese person was present. By then, instead of sending the Chinese labourers back to China like so many discarded "threshing machines", the federal government undertook a series of legal measures designed to deter them from returning, and then to profit from Chinese immigration.

The federal government did not respond positively to all of the recommendations in the Royal Commission's Report but it was quick to act. On April 13, 1885, Chapleau (as Secretary of State) introduced into the Parliament An Act to Restrict and Regulate Chinese Immigration into Canada. It received royal assent from the Governor General on July 20, 1885.

The main objective of the Act was to stem the inflow of Chinese immigrants looking for work in this land of opportunities; the "gold mountain", as it was called by many Chinese. To achieve this goal, several measures were introduced in the Act. One of these restricted incoming ships to carrying one Chinese immigrant to every fifty tons; that meant the cargo ships could bring in no more than fifty Chinese immigrants. The penalty for defaulting or defrauding was the seizure of the ship, a fine of $500 to $1000 and imprisonment. The most deplorable provision of the Act, however, was the imposition of a head tax on all Chinese.

What is a Head Tax?

"Struggle..., struggle it was..."

Chin Louie, a pioneer describing his life in Canada

(from Recollections of Chinese Canadian Pioneers,

unpublished)

• • •

From 1886 to 1923, all Chinese, with the exception of diplomats, tourists, merchants, "men of science" and students, had to pay a special admission charge of $50 in order to enter Canada.

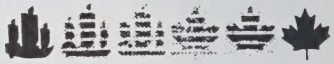
The $50 head tax had an immediate impact on Chinese immigration; the number dropped from 1200 in 1885 to 212 in 1886. However, the message that Chinese were not welcome did not deter the Chinese from wanting to come. In response to the head tax, many Chinese peasant families pooled resources from relatives, sold family properties and borrowed from neighbours and friends, to obtain the funds required to send the eldest son of the family to Canada.

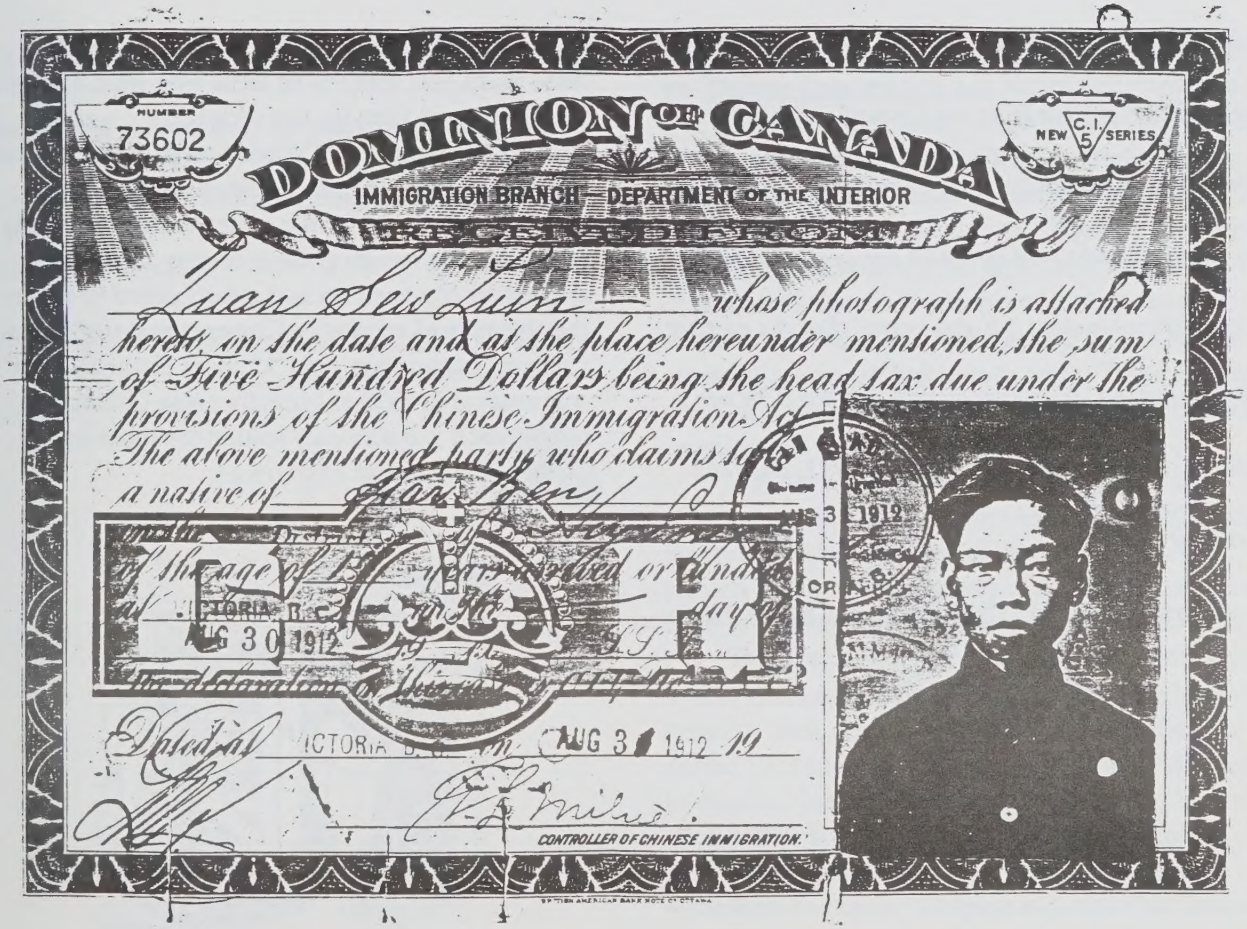
Despite the economic and political adversity facing Chinese in Canada, Chinese immigrants continued to enter. In 1890, the number of Chinese immigrants increased to 1166 and remained at an average of 2000 per year between 1891 and 1898. In 1899, the number jumped to 4000. In response, the following year, legislation was passed doubling the head tax to $100. It had no effect on the level of Chinese immigration. In 1903, a record number of 5000 Chinese arrived. That same year, the head tax was further increased to $500, which amounted to 2 years' wages. The level of Chinese immigration dropped temporarily, but rose back to between 5000 and 7000 per year from 1911 to 1914.

The value of the head tax becomes more apparent when it is compared to the cost of other items at that time. For example, the weekly cost to an average family in British Columbia of staple foods, fuel, lighting and rent in the month of December, for 1900-20, was as follows:

	1900	1905	1910	1920
Staple foods	$6.90	$7.74	$9.06	$15.93
Fuel and lighting	1.86	1.73	2.20	3.75
Rent	3.26	3.78	4.64	6.38
Total	12.02	13.25	15.90	26.06

Between 1885 and 1923, the Canadian government collected about 23 million dollars from the Chinese immigrants (Source: Canada Year Book, 1923). The current value of this money, accounting for interest and inflation, would be several hundred million dollars.




NUMBER
73602
DOMINION OF CANADA
NEW C.I. 5 SERIES
IMMIGRATION BRANCH — DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Luau Dee Luen
whose photograph is attached
hereto, on the date and at the place hereunder mentioned, the sum
of Five Hundred Dollars being the head tax due under the
provisions of the Chinese Immigration Act.
The above mentioned party who claims to
a native of
AUG 30 1912
AUG 3 1912
Dated at VICTORIA B.C. on AUG 31 1912 19
CONTROLLER OF CHINESE IMMIGRATION.
BRITISH AMERICAN BANK NOTE CO. OTTAWA

What Happened to the Head Tax Money?

Between 1905 and 1914 alone the government collected $13.8 million from the Chinese. This figure is equivalent to about 8 per cent of all excise duties collected in Canada, and about 14 per cent of the national defense budget, for this period. But the number of Chinese in Canada accounted only for 0.39 per cent of the Canadian population in 1911, and 0.45 per cent in 1921.

Professor Peter S. Li (The Chinese in Canada, 1988)

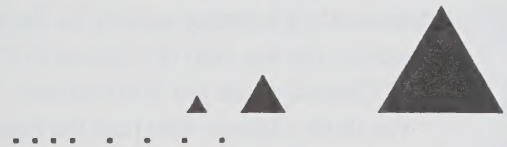
Over 81,000 Chinese paid the head tax. Between these years, less than 9% of those who were admitted were exempted from paying such tax.

At the same time, Canada was paying European immigrants to settle in the Prairies. Chinese immigrants in effect paid for the settlement of large parts of Canada at a crucial point in history. Since the imposition of a head tax had clearly failed to achieve the objective of restricting Chinese immigration, the Chinese Immigration Act ("Chinese Exclusion Act") was enacted in 1923 to virtually cease Chinese immigration and seriously restrict the mobility of many of the Chinese immigrants.

Chinese Exclusion Act, 1923

To admit Orientals in large numbers would mean in the end the extinction of the white people, and we always have in mind the necessity of keeping this a white man's country.

Sir Richard McBride (from A Whiteman's Country, 1975)



On July 1, 1923, the Canadian government passed the Chinese Immigration Act, the most comprehensive act to exclude Chinese from entering the country and to control those already here. According to the Act, the entry into Canada of "persons of Chinese origin or descent irrespective of allegiance or citizenship" would be restricted to diplomatic corps, children born in Canada to parents of Chinese race or descent, merchants and students. All other Chinese essentially were excluded from entry. Those seeking admission were to be segregated from the public for examination.

The Act also stipulated that every person of Chinese origin in Canada, irrespective of citizenship, was required to register with the government of Canada within twelve months after the Act came into force and to obtain a certificate of such registration.

The Act virtually stopped any further immigration of Chinese to Canada, and legalized the inferior status of those already in the country. Between the period 1923 to 1946, only 25 Chinese were allowed to come to Canada. It was not until after the Second World War, in 1947, that the "Chinese Exclusion Act" was repealed. Until that year, the Chinese Canadians had never celebrated Canada Day. Instead, July 1 was seen as "Humiliation Day".

Socio-Economic Impact of the Head Tax and the Chinese Exclusion Act

Leaving his hometown for places far far away,

My dear husband has been gone for 10 years.

Willow trees turning green, the leaves falling;

Trying hard to remember his face,

As I spin in the weaving mills with my tears.

Toishan folksong (Translated by Avvy Go, 1988)

The head tax together with the "Chinese Exclusion Act" retarded the growth of the Chinese Canadian communities. Many of the these pioneers left China without their wives and families to seek a better economic life in Canada. Others came as political refugees. Many who stayed after the completion of the railway could not bring their families over to Canada because of their meagre earnings, the excessive head tax and the discriminatory immigration practices. The Chinese Canadian community was predominantly a bachelor society. In the year 1911, for instance, the sex ratio of Chinese in Canada stood at 2790 Chinese males per 100 females.

For those Chinese who paid the head tax, with the exception of a few wealthy merchants, life was very hard. Employers exploited the Chinese labourers' readiness to work harder for less, and would generally pay a Chinese worker at half of a white worker's wages. Out of their low wages the Chinese workers had to send a portion back to their families in China to fulfill their obligations to their families, as well as to repay the head tax money borrowed from relatives and friends.

Life was also very lonely. The head tax and subsequent exclusion act prevented these early Chinese settlers from bringing their families over. An

elderly Chinese recalled:

> *"I remember looking out over the big dining room of our restaurant on a busy day in 1946. I counted one hundred old Chinese men sitting out there and just six women, four Chinese and two Canadian. And I thought to myself, if Canadian culture has a Christian spirit, how could they deny Chinese their families? The whole city of Toronto didn't have a dozen Chinese women in 1946. You know, they talk a lot about the Chinese gambling and all those things, but don't forget, this was all there was to do. We had no family to go home to. I returned to China three times to see my family, but I couldn't bring them back with me."*

Life was made even harder and lonelier as a result of the anti-Chinese sentiments which were rampant at the time. Racial hostilities were manifested in many forms, from name-calling to window smashing, from discriminatory business practices such as racial segregation in movie houses, to discriminatory laws which denied the voting right to the Chinese. This in turn precluded the Chinese from practising various professions such as law, pharmacy and chartered accountancy. In addition, there were numerous laws (especially in British Columbia) directed specifically against the Chinese. There were laws prohibiting Chinese from working in coal mines or in public works. There were licence fees for laundries. There were restrictive municipal by-laws aimed at Chinese businesses. Humiliation was heaped upon the hardships and loneliness that these early Chinese immigrants had to endure.

Progress to Equality

Every individual is equal before and under the law, and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination, and in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, sex, age and mental or physical disability.

Section 15(1) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Of course, over the years things have changed for the better. Following World War II and the return of some Chinese Canadian war veterans, there was increased lobbying to recognize equal rights for the Chinese. In 1947, the "Chinese Exclusion Act" was repealed and Chinese Canadians received the right to vote at the provincial and federal levels. In 1949, the vote at the municipal level was won in Vancouver. In 1967, the merit system was declared as part of Canadian immigration policy and the principle of non-discrimination on racial or national grounds was pronounced. In 1971, multiculturalism was declared a national policy. In 1978, the government repealed a provision in the Immigration Act that allowed the immigration department to prevent entrance "to any nationality or race if such immigrants were deemed unsuitable having regard to the climatic, industrial, social, educational, labour or other condition of Canada" or "because of their probable inability to become readily assimilated." In 1982, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms became entrenched in our constitution, leading in 1985 to the protection of our rights to equality before the law, without discrimination on the basis of race.

My grandfather paid the head tax. He is over 90 years old. He is in a nursing home. I often wonder, whenever the CCNC is discussing this issue, whether he will live to see justice done...If the government's plan is to wait until all the head tax claimants die off, it is carrying out its plan well...But the issue will not die.

Gary Yee (CCNC National President, 1987 speech)

Yes, we have come a long way, but there are still with us today many elderly Chinese Canadians who have paid the price of the head tax and endured the humiliation of various discriminatory practices in order to work and live in this country. They have witnessed the progress of our nation towards social justice and inter-racial harmony.

Some of these early Chinese settlers have gladly buried the past, content in the knowledge that their children and grandchildren are doing well in their professions, business or studies, and are satisfied with the assurances that the racial discriminations of the past shall not be allowed to happen again. However, there are also many who are less fortunate. These are the old men living in the rooming houses of Chinatown. These are the lonely and forgotten members of our community.

Mr. Shack Yee is one of them. He came to Canada in 1918 when he was fifteen years old. His family in China raised the money to pay the $500 head tax for him. He washed dishes in Maple Creek, Saskatchewan, and later worked as a waiter and as a cook in Winnipeg, Prince Albert, Saskatoon and Moose Jaw, before finally retiring in Vancouver after sixty-five years of hard work. He never made it rich. He has never been able to bring his wife and son over from China. The wife has died recently, and the son has married and his children have already grown up. Mr. Shack Yee is now over eighty years old and is living by himself in a seniors' apartmenthouse near Vancouver's Chinatown. His health is not good. He has tried to apply for one of his grandsons to immigrate from China to look after him in his old age, but the application has been rejected time after time despite the pleas of a local Member of Parliament to the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

In response to the request of another elderly Chinese Canadian who paid the $500 head tax, that same Member of Parliament raised the issue of the head tax in the House of Commons on February 2, 1984, and asked the government to redress the past injustice. It drew the attention of the national media and the issue was reported in radio, TV and in newspapers across the country. Over 2000 Chinese Canadians responded by reporting that they or their relatives had paid the head tax. About one-third of those reports came from head tax payers who are still alive today. The Chinese Canadian National Council (CCNC) has over 2600 registered head tax claimants.

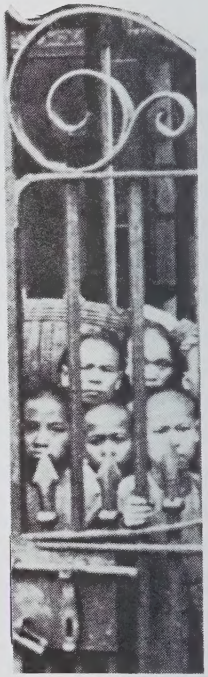
The government's response to our call for justice so far has been sympathetic but non-committal. Furthermore, although this is essentially a justice

issue, the matter has been taken up by multiculturalism ministers; we have had four different ones in as many years. It is therefore incumbent on all of us to put more pressure on the government to take speedy action. On May 14, 1988, the Chinese Canadian National Council, by unanimous resolution at its All-Presidents Meeting, called upon the government of Canada to:

1. Acknowledge the injustice and racial discrimination inherent in the Head Tax imposed on Chinese immigrants from 1885 to 1923 and in the Chinese Immigration (Exclusion) Act which prohibited Chinese immigration from 1923 to 1947;
2. Recognize the suffering of individual Chinese Canadians and the entire Chinese Canadian community that resulted from this legislated discrimination, including the emotional and financial hardship, and the forced separation of families;
3. Return a symbolic sum consisting of the amount unjustly collected as Head Tax, by way of a trust foundation to address the past injustices and to ensure that similar discriminatory government actions do not happen again.

The Chinese Canadian community has a long history of contribution to this nation. The community has matured and developed to a point where it can demand a resolution of the head tax and exclusion issue. A satisfactory resolution is essential to the continued progress of the community as a full and integral part of Canada.

With the enactment of the Charter, Canadians are also awakening to the reality of discrimination and racism that exists in our society, and the people are finally given the constitutional power to combat these moral — and legal — wrongs. The head tax and exclusion act were the utmost manifestation of injustice and racism against a particular group of people, that is, the Chinese Canadians. It is therefore our constitutional right and duty to redress the wrongs that have been done towards the hundreds of thousands of Chinese Canadians in the past, in the present, and to prevent similar wrongs from being committed in the future.



Summary

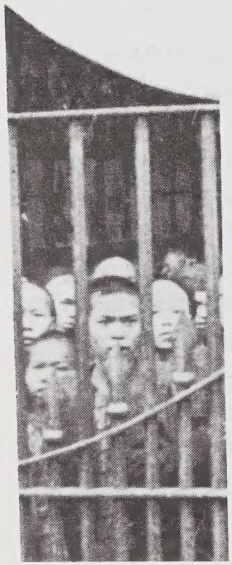
The history of immigration in Canada has also been the history of injustice and racism, especially towards immigrants from China. Ever since the first Chinese settlers set foot on the great land of Canada in 1858, they were faced with countless discriminatory and humiliating laws directed against them. Among the legislation, the most deplorable was the head tax that was levied only on the Chinese between the years 1885 and 1923, followed by the Chinese Immigration (Exclusion) Act which prohibited Chinese immigration to Canada from 1923 until the Act was repealed in 1947.

Many Chinese workers toiled in the construction of Canada's trans-national railroad. But right after the last spike was driven in, measures were taken in 1885 to stop Chinese immigration by imposing a head tax. However, despite this apparent goal, the immediate effect was the suffering of tens of thousands of Canadian Chinese who were subject to the tax, and the separation of wives from their husbands, children from their fathers. Originally, the head tax was set at $50 per person, but it was later increased to $100 in 1900, and then to $500 in 1904 — an amount which took a worker two years to make at that time. The government probably never anticipated that it would end up collecting $23 million from the taxes imposed on Chinese immigrants.

Since 1984, the Chinese Canadian National Council (CCNC) has been trying to obtain redress from the government for this blatantly racist mark on our history. Despite our efforts, not much progress has been made. The issue is now in the hands of the fourth Minister responsible for Multiculturalism.

The CCNC's proposal for redress includes a trust foundation for the community consisting of the return of a symbolic sum, being the amount collected as head tax. Basically, this sum is approximately $23 million and does not even include any interest or inflation. This money should never have been collected in the first place. It is only fair for it to be returned.

The head tax and exclusion act issue concerns an injustice done to the Chinese Canadian community and to many Chinese Canadian individuals. This wrong has had a continuous impact. Human beings, collectively and individually, are what they have gone through in their lifetime. For Chinese Canadians, our historical experience has left us with some humiliated, angered and dismayed individuals who have grown strong enough within a community that is also strong enough to speak up and ask for our entitlement — an acknowledgment and redress of the injustice. It is only fair.



References

1. Berton, Pierre, The Last Spike -the Great Railway, 1881-1885, McClelland and Stewart Ltd.,Toronto/Montreal, 1971.
2. Campbell, Persia Crawford, Chinese Coolie Immigration published in 1923, reprinted by Negro University Press, New York, 1969.
3. Canada, Parliament, House of Common, Common Debates 1903-1968.
4. Canada, Parliament, Senate, Standing Committee on Labour & Immigration, Proceedings.
5. Census of Canada, 1870-1971.
6. Chan, Anthony, Gold Mountain: The Chinese in the New World, New Star Books, Vancouver, 1983.
7. Cheng, Tien-Fang, Oriental Immigration in Canada, The Commercial Press Ltd.,Shanghai, China, 1931 Microfilm, Xerography in Michigan, 1968.
8. Cheng, Wendy et al.,"The Hundred Year Old Pioneer - Chin Louie" in Recollections of Chinese Canadian Pioneers, Vancouver, unpublished manuscript.
9. Chinese Canadian Historical Photo Exhibition, 1979.
10. Con et. al, From China to Canada, McClelland & Steward Ltd., in association with Multiculturalism Directorate Secretary of State & Canadian Government Publishing Centre, Supply and Services Canada, 1982.
11. Coolidge, Mary Roberts, Chinese Immigration, Arno Press, 1969.
12. Ferguson, Ted, A Whiteman's Country, Doubleday Canada Ltd, Toronto, 1975.
13. Lee, Wai-Man ed., Portraits of a Challenge: An Illustrated History of the Chinese Canadians, Council of Chinese Canadians in Ontario, Toronto, 1984.
14. Li, Peter, The Chinese in Canada, Toronto: Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1988
15. Lindenberger, Alice, Stella Ng & Peggy Suen, Background Paper on Some Aspects of Chinese Canadian Culture, Burnaby Multicultural Society, Vancouver, 1985.
16. Morton, James, In the Sea of Sterile Mountains: The Chinese in British Columbia, J.J. Douglas, Vancouver, 1974.
17. Onderdonk's letter to Sir John A. Macdonald, Public Archives Canada, Macdonald Paper No.144779, Ottawa, 14th June, 1882.
18. Onderdonks' file, Public Archives of Canada.
19. Ormsby, Margaret A.,British Columbia: A History, MacMillan of Canada, Vancouver, 1958.
20. Report of the Royal Commission on Oriental Immigration. Ottawa: Printed by Order of the Commission, 1885.
21. Immigration, Ottawa: Printed by S.E. Dawson, 1902.
22. Sampat-Mehta, R.,International Barriers, National Research Bureau, Ottawa, 1973.
23. Scott, F.R.,"All the Spikes but the Last," in Selected Poems, Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1966.
24. Tao, Tommy, The Case for Compensation: Call for Redress, unpublished manuscript, 1985.
25. Ward, Peter, White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes & Public Policy towards Orientals in British Columbia, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978.

All photos are from Lee, Wai-Man, Portraits of a Challenge: An Illustrated HIstory of the Chinese Canadians, Council of Chinese Canadians in Ontario, Toronto, 1984.

Chinese Canadian National Council
386 Bathurst St. 2nd fl. Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M5T 2S6
(416) 868-1777

Chinese Canadian National Council

In 1979, Chinese Canadians across the country joined in a civil rights movement to protest the irresponsible journalism of a nationally-televised broadcast—W5's "Campus Giveaway". As a result, CTV publicly acknowledged and apologized for the racist overtone and inaccuracies of the program which showed Chinese Canadians as "foreign" students in our universities.

At the eve of CTV's apology, a national meeting was held in Toronto by representatives from the Ad Hoc Committees Against W5 that had sprang up in sixteen Canadians cities. The need for a national organization to promote the rights and interests of Chinese Canadians became so evident that the Chinese Canadian National Council (CCNC) was subsequently formed.

Since our establishment in 1980, we have grown to 23 chapters across Canada. We have expanded our scope of activities in political, civil, social and cultural spheres. We remain an active force for the protection of Chinese Canadian civil and political rights.

We are involved in policy consultation and lobbying issues that concern the Chinese community. We are also active in advocating human rights and race relations. From time to time, we organize special events such as the 1987 Photo Exhibit of 150 Years of Chinese Women in North America. This and other educational and cultural activities serve to raise the awareness in our community and in the general public of issues that have direct impact on us.

Chapters

Calgary
Edmonton
London
Ottawa
Toronto
Winnipeg
Central Ontario Chinese Cultural Centre
Chinese Benevolent Association of Vancouver
Chinese Canadian Mutual Help, Vancouver
Chinese Canadian Society (Hamilton — Wentworth, Halton)
Chinese Cultural Association of New Brunswick, Fredericton
Chinese Cultural Society of Saskatchewan, Regina
Chinese Cultural Society of Saskatchewan. Saskatoon
Chinese Neighbourhood Society of Montreal
Essex County Chinese Canadian Association, Windsor
Halifax Chinese Cultural Centre
Moncton Chinese Friendship Association
Renfrew County Chinese Cultural Society
Sarnia — Lambton Chinese Canadian Association
Chinese Cultural Association of Saint John, N.B.
Chinese Canadian Association of Kingston & Districts
Regina Chinese Canadian Association
United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society, Vancouver

Objectives of the CCNC

To promote the rights of all individuals, in particular, those of Chinese Canadians and to encourage their full and equal participation in Canadian society.

To create an environment in this country in which the rights of all individuals are fully recognized and protected.

To promote understanding and cooperation between Chinese Canadians and all other ethnic, cultural and racial groups in Canada.

To encourage and develop in persons of Chinese descent, a desire to know and to respect their historical and cultural heritage; to educate them in adapting a creative and positive attitude towards the Chinese Canadian contribution to society and the Chinese Canadian heritage.

To develop community resources through voluntary participation and community networking.

It is only Fair!

Chinese Canadian National Council